Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Though Claim 1 has been cancelled herein without prejudice, the pronominal issue has been addressed, in amending Claim 3, in a manner believed to obviate the rejection. (A similar issue has been addressed in amending Claim 14.) Accordingly, it is submitted that now-independent Claim 3 (see below) and Claims 4-11 fulfill the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejection are thus hereby respectfully requested.

The Office indicated that Claims 3-6 and 14-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Such action has indeed been undertaken by this Amendment. Accordingly it is respectfully submitted that Claims 3-6 and 14-17 are allowable. By virtue of dependence from now independent Claims 3 and 14, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 7-11 and 18-22 are also allowable. Claims 1, 2, 12 and 13 have been cancelled herein without prejudice.
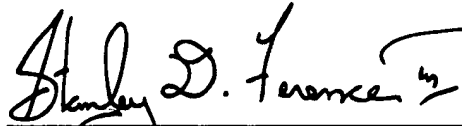
The Office states that "Claims 1 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Picone et al., Patent No;. 5,293,452 in view of Setlur et al., Patent No. 5,717,826." However, the ensuing comments in the Action are also directed to Claims 2, 7-13 and 18-22. It is thus assumed that the 103 rejection is intended to cover all of Claims 1, 2, 7-13 and 18-23. The Office is respectfully encouraged to contact the undersigned if this assumption is not correct. Proceeding on Applicant's present assumption, reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejection are hereby respectfully requested.

The cancellation of Claims 1, 2, 12 and 13 obviates the present rejection of those claims. Further, as stated above, Claims 3 and 14 have presently been rewritten in a manner indicated by the Office to be allowable. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 7-11 and 18-22 are allowable by virtue of dependence from Claims 3 and 14; dependencies among those claims have been changed where needed.

Claim 23 has been amended in a manner to recite subject matter similar to Claim 14. For this reason, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 23 is also now allowable.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application, including Claims 3-11 and 14-23, is presently in condition for allowance. Notice to the effect is hereby earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanley D. Ference III
Registration No. 33,879

FERENCE & ASSOCIATES
400 Broad Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15143
(412) 741-8400
(412) 741-9292 - Facsimile

Attorneys for Applicants

MARKED-UP VERSION OF CLAIM AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

Claims 1, 2, 12 and 13, currently on file, are cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 3, 7-9, 14, 18-20 and 23 are rewritten as follows:

-- 3. **(Amended)** [The] An apparatus [according to Claim 2] for verifying verbal utterances, [further] said apparatus comprising:

a target password sentence generator which generates at least one target password sentence;

an acceptance arrangement which compares text based on a verbal utterance to at least one target password sentence and which accepts or rejects the verbal utterance based on its comparison to the at least one target password sentence;

a decoder which transforms a verbal utterance into decoded text for being compared to the at least one target password sentence in said acceptance arrangement; and

a finite state grammar generator which generates a finite state grammar to be employed by said decoder;

said decoder being adapted to transform a verbal utterance into decoded text via employing the finite state grammar to modify the verbal utterance.--

-- 7. **(Amended)** The apparatus according to Claim [1] 3, wherein said target

password sentence generator is adapted to accept prompted text corresponding to at least

one password.--

-- 8. **(Amended)** The apparatus according to Claim [1] 3, wherein said target

password sentence generator is adapted to automatically generate at least one password as

a baseform that is derived from an acoustic enrollment.--

-- 9. **(Amended)** The apparatus according to Claim [1] 3, wherein said

acceptance arrangement is adapted to derive a match score based on comparing text based

on a verbal utterance to the at least one target password sentence and to base acceptance

or rejection of the verbal utterance on the match score.--

-- 14. **(Amended)** [The] A method [according to Claim 13] of verifying verbal

utterances, [further] said method comprising:

generating at least one target password sentence;

comparing text based on a verbal utterance to at least one target password

sentence;

accepting or rejecting the verbal utterance based on its comparison to the at least

one target password sentence;

transforming the verbal utterance into decoded text;

said comparing step comprising comparing the decoded text to the at least one

target password sentence; and

generating a finite state grammar;

said transforming step comprising transforming the verbal utterance into decoded

text via employing the finite state grammar to modify the verbal utterance.--

-- 18. (Amended) The method according to Claim [12] 14, wherein said step of

generating at least one target password sentence comprises accepting prompted text.--

-- 19. (Amended) The method according to Claim [12] 14, wherein said step of

generating at least one target password sentence comprises automatically generating a

baseform derived from an acoustic enrollment.--

-- 20. (Amended) The method according to Claim [12] 14, wherein said step of

accepting or rejecting comprises deriving a match score based on comparing text based

on the verbal utterance to the at least one target password sentence and to base acceptance

or rejection of the verbal utterance on the match score.--

-- 23. (Amended) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly

embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps

for verifying verbal utterances, said method comprising:

generating at least one target password sentence;

comparing text based on a verbal utterance to at least one target password

sentence; [and]

accepting or rejecting the verbal utterance based on its comparison to the at least

one target password sentence;

transforming the verbal utterance into decoded text;

said comparing step comprising comparing the decoded text to the at least one

target password sentence; and

generating a finite state grammar;

said transforming step comprising transforming the verbal utterance into decoded

text via employing the finite state grammar to modify the verbal utterance.--